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EGYPT-PERSIAN GULF STATES: Mubarak's Security Agenda

Egyptian President Mubarak, midway through a weeklong visit to the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman—is continuing to emphasize Egypt's willingness to assist the Persian Gulf states militarily. [REDACTED] in Riyadh Mubarak discussed the contingency plans to defend Egypt against an Iranian attack, including the option of sending about 15,000 Egyptian troops to supplement Gulf troops. [REDACTED] Mubarak will decline Gulf state requests for stationing Egyptian troops in the region unless Iran expands its attacks beyond Iraq to another Gulf state. [REDACTED] the President's primary aim is to pledge only arms, training, and logistic support while urging the Gulf states to renew economic participation in the Arab Organization for Industrialization, created in the late 1970s for joint Egyptian-Gulf defense production. [REDACTED]

Comment: Mubarak's guarantees of military assistance underscore the primary item on his agenda during the visits—securing Gulf state commitments to renew economic assistance to Egypt—and Cairo's limited ability to offer much in exchange. The Egyptians probably will continue to participate in contingency planning with the Gulf states, and possibly with Jordan, to assuage concerns of the Gulf states and to demonstrate the extent of Egypt's commitment. Despite any talks on sending Egyptian troops to the Gulf, neither Saudi Arabia nor Kuwait are likely to request such assistance, and Cairo will remain reluctant to send troops barring Iranian attacks on the Gulf Council states. [REDACTED]

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